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SUBJECT: MAPUTO III: TGV FINALLY FEELING THE HEAT?

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF DOVIE HOLLAND FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D.

11. (C) SUMMARY: The leaders of three out of four of Madagascar's main political movements -- all but Transition President Rajoelina -- departed Dec. 3 for a third summit to be held in Maputo Dec. 4 to discuss the allocation of cabinet posts in Madagascar's delayed power-sharing transition government. Although Rajoelina publicly stated three times that he would not go to Maputo, his chief of staff told Ambassador Marquardt that Rajoelina would participate via DVC. In a series of meetings this week with key transition leaders linked with all four movements, Ambassador Marquardt was told that despite Rajoelina's bluster, he is aware of the increasingly united opposition against him - and may be prepared to compromise on several key ministries that have hitherto blocked progress on forming a government. The Ambassador repeatedly stressed in these meetings and in press interviews that AGOA will be lost unless a government and other concrete steps occur in the coming days. End summary.

Maputo III: Without Rajoelina?

12. (C) SADC mediator, and former Mozambican President, Chissano has organized a third summit in Maputo and invited the chiefs of Madagascar's four feuding political movements, despite encouragement to him from the UN to come resolve remaining issues here in Madagascar instead. (Curiously, the AU seems entirely absent from planning for this event.) Former Presidents Ratsiraka, Zafy, and Ravalomanana, as well as their delegation leaders, have reportedly all departed for Maputo, many on a SADC chartered plane, for the meeting on Dec. 4. However, Transition President Rajoelina has refused to travel to Mozambique, due to pressure by his supporters to avoid participating and giving up further ground to the opposition. His chief of staff told the Ambassador Dec. 3 that Rajoelina would participate via DVC -- a solution which could allow him to save face and at the same time possibly wrap up the formation of the delayed transition government. Meanwhile, over the past week, in a manner all too reminiscent of Ravalomanana in February-March 2009, Rajoelina has been making politically-motivated daytrips to the provinces while apparently making no effort to engage with the other parties to find a compromise to establish the government. The perception that he is running away from his problems is not lost on anyone here.

Consensus PM Has Limited Authority

13. (C) The consensus PM Mangalaza lacks the authority to name the cabinet, and -- in an emotional 150-minute meeting on

December 1 -- requested the international community's support to pressure Rajoelina to participate in the Maputo summit or otherwise move the government formation process forward. In response, the US, French, and German ambassadors and the Nuncio (Dean) requested an appointment with Rajoelina for that purpose, but have not been granted an audience yet. In the December 1 meeting, Mangalaza evinced his growing frustration, but said he is not inclined to resign. He is considering moving ahead with the three movements, which in a joint press conference have categorically blamed Rajoelina for the failure to form a government.

A Rough Week for Rajoelina

¶4. (C) On December 1, the Ravalomanana movement came out in support of Chissano's invitation, and released a statement identifying five areas for further discussion: the functioning of the co-presidency and the Presidential Council; the formation of a transition government; the creation of a SADC/AU/UN/OIF monitoring team; the creation of an Independent National Electoral Commission; and the determination of dates for elections. On December 3 a delegation led by Ravalomanana supporter Manandafy met with the Ambassador and said they would be going to Maputo. They acknowledged general and rising public disgust at the inability of the politicians to find a solution.

¶5. (C) On Dec 2, representatives of three movements, led by Co-President Fetison, gave a press conference expressing their support for Maputo III, outlining publicly the state of negotiations over ministerial posts, and placing the

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responsibility for failure to form a government categorically on Rajoelina and his supporters. In recent meetings with the Ambassador and DCM, Rajoelina's advisers Norbert Lala Ratsirahonana and Zaza said that Rajoelina recognizes that he must compromise, and is prepared to give the disputed ministries of National Education and Mines to Zafy. In the Ambassador's Dec. 2 call on former President Zafy, he indicated that the other movements see Rajoelina as weak and are increasingly likely to call his bluff. In response to Rajoelina's invitation to a four-way DVC, Zafy said to Ambassador "we're not even going to reply to this". Zafy has been on the phone with local leaders, telling them to ignore the central government until a proper transition government has been formed. Zafy is convinced that growing unrest in the provinces spells trouble if they delay further in Tana, but he gave the impression that he thinks Rajoelina will cede to the rising pressure.

Some Positive News: CNR

¶6. (C) During his meeting with Zafy Dec. 2, the Ambassador asked if Zafy, as President of the National Reconciliation Council (CNR), could "move in parallel", rather than waiting first for the formation of the cabinet to set up this key institution. Zafy said that he has all of the nine names for CNR members from the four movements, but had been waiting for the new government to sign on the dotted line. However, he was favorable to moving ahead, offering also to work to get the Congress and Senate on their feet even if the government continues to lag.

Comment: Uncertain Outcome

¶7. (C) In all of the week's meetings, as well as several press interviews, the Ambassador urged his interlocutors to act speedily to implement the transition government and warned that the imminent decision on AGOA eligibility otherwise will be negative. As pressure continues to mount all around (including from the EU, the military, and the increasingly desperate Malagasy private sector), it is hard to see how Rajoelina can continue his current course of ignoring the lack of a transition government. Perhaps a DVC will save the day tomorrow, but the outcome of Maputo III

remains uncertain. End comment.
MARQUARDT